

BIRDS OBSERVED IN AND NEAR TAMBARAM, CHINGLEPUT DISTRICT, SOUTH INDIA.

(December 1932 to April 1938).

BY

ALICE M. BARNES.

Tambaram lies 16 miles south-west of Madras city, about 9 miles inland, at an average elevation of 100 ft. The surrounding country is very largely uncultivated scrub jungle with several groups of low rocky hills, the highest of which rise only to 600 ft. Round the foot of the hills the scrub becomes much thicker and forms dense thickets of small trees and thorny shrubs, wothia, dalbergia, albizzia and neem being some of the commonest trees. These hills and the elevated land round them form the catchment areas for several large tanks, from which rice fields are irrigated. There is very little other cultivation.

Four hundred acres of this scrub jungle were acquired and enclosed in 1930 for the new site of the Madras Christian College, and since October 1932 we—my husband and I—have lived on this estate, with the exception of April to December 1936 when we were on leave. The following notes are based on observations made during the periods October 1932 to April 1936, and January 1937 to April 1938; they refer to birds seen either on the college compound or in the immediate neighbourhood. The records are necessarily incomplete as we do not shoot, and are therefore unable to identify some birds, or to determine the races of others with any certainty.

During the years 1931 to 1938 several acres of the college estate have been cleared of scrub for buildings and playing fields, and a very large number of trees have been planted, but considerably more than half the area is still untouched jungle. The whole estate has been declared a sanctuary for wild life, so that it still affords ample opportunity for careful bird observation, in spite of its greatly increased human population. As the trees grow, birds which haunt large trees are beginning to make their appearance, though at present only occasionally.

The scientific names given in the list are taken from *Birds of Southern India* by Baker and Inglis and the notes on the Vernay Ornithological Survey of the Eastern Ghats published in the Bombay Natural History Society's *Journal*.

LIST OF BIRDS.

1. **The Jungle Crow** : *Corvus macrorhynchos culminatus* Sykes.

Observed throughout the year; in jungle and garden; common, but not so numerous as the House Crow.

2. **The Common Indian House Crow** : *Corvus splendens splendens* Vieillot.

Observed throughout the year; in jungle and garden. In the earlier part of the period of observation, there were few houses and therefore few crows

in this neighbourhood; the crows have increased with the human population, and are now very common.

3. **The White-headed Babbler** : *Turdoides striatus polioplocamus* Ober.

Observed throughout the year; very common, in jungle and garden. The heads of many are conspicuously white.

A nest with 3 eggs was found in a casuarina hedge in the garden in July 1934; two chicks were hatched, but stolen before they were fully fledged.

Two very young fledglings were observed in a bush, being fed by their parents, on September 3rd, 1937.

4. **The Common Babbler** : *Argya caudata caudata* Dumont.

Observed throughout the year; very common. Flocks are mainly seen in the scrub jungle, and very seldom come into the garden, though their pretty tinkling song is frequently heard in the bushes just beyond the garden limits.

5. **The Indian Yellow-eyed Babbler** : *Pyctorhis sinensis sinensis* Gmel.

Throughout the year; very common; in garden and jungle; nearly always seen in pairs.

6. **The Common Iora** : *Aegithina tiphia humei* Stuart Baker.

Throughout the year; very common; in garden and jungle.

7. **The Red-vented Bulbul** : *Molpastes cafer cafer* Linn.

Throughout the year; one of the commonest birds in this neighbourhood, large numbers always about in jungle and garden.

Nests and eggs have been found as follows:—

January 1933—nest finished but not used.

February 1938—3 eggs.

August 1934—1 egg.

November 1937—3 eggs.

December 1932—three nests: (a) 3 eggs, (b) 2 eggs, (c) 3 eggs.

These nests have all been identified by the presence of the parent birds; a good many other bulbul nests have been found but as they were not in use, have not been recorded.

In some cases the time of incubation could be observed, e.g. (a) November 11th, 1937—1 egg in nest, 12th—2 eggs, 13th—3 eggs; November 25th—2 newly hatched chicks and 1 egg in this nest. (b) February 13th, 1938—1 egg in nest, 14th—2 eggs, 15th—2 eggs at 7.30 a.m., but 3 eggs at 5 p.m. February 25th—three newly hatched chicks in this nest.

These observations were made about seven o'clock each morning.

The November 1937 nest was built, and the family reared, during the N.-E. monsoon rains. Three of the above nests were built about 6 ft. from the ground in forks near the ends of branches in a bauhinia tree close to our house; others have been at about the same height in young wothia trees in the garden or jungle, and one in a casuarina hedge. The foundations of all the nests seem to have been of cobwebs.

8. **The Southern Red-whiskered Bulbul** : *Otocompsa jocosa emeria* Linn.

Throughout the year. This is as common as the Red-vented Bulbul, and seems to be one of the most numerous birds in this neighbourhood. It is always about both garden and scrub jungle, and also in the thicker jungle near and on the neighbouring hills.

There is no doubt about its race, as it conforms exactly to the description of *emia* given by Whistler; the tail is tipped with white.

Nests have been found as follows:—

August 1934—2 eggs. Nest in a bush in the garden. These eggs were both stolen and sucked, presumably by a rat.

March 1938—this nest was placed too high for its contents to be seen; it was at least 12 ft. up in a bauhinia tree in the garden. Parents were observed bringing food to the nest.

9. **White-browed Bulbul** : *Pycnonotus luteolus luteolus* Linn.

Throughout the year. It is very common in both jungle and garden, but less frequently seen, and perhaps less numerous, than the two preceding bulbuls.

10. **The Pied Brsh-Chat :** *Saxicola caprata*.

Observed throughout the year. Not very numerous, but as each pair seems to have definite 'territory', they can almost always be found in certain spots of garden and jungle.

11. **The Black Redstart :** *Phoenicurus ochrurus*.

Observed at Tambaram only in January and February 1936, when it frequented uninhabited buildings on the college compound and could be seen almost any day for nearly two months.

A Redstart was observed at Tada, about 40 miles due north of Madras on January 29th, 1938.

12. **The Black-backed Indian Robin :** *Saxicoloides fulicata* Linn.

Throughout the year; one of our commonest birds in jungle and garden.

Nests have been found as follows:—

April 1933, a nest being built in a rain gutter; eggs not seen.

August 1933, a nest being built in more or less the same spot in the rain gutter.

June 1934, another nest in the gutter.

June 1935, a nest being built in another gutter.

August 1935, a nest being built in an empty, broken flower-pot in the garden; this was disturbed by the gardener just as the nest was finished, and it was therefore deserted.

March 1937; on the 21st we first noticed the nest being built; both birds help with the work. On the 31st we found two eggs in the nest. The nest was abandoned before the eggs were hatched, probably because it had been disturbed by a gardener.

April 1937; a hen robin was discovered sitting on a nest in a dwarf date palm in the jungle; number of eggs not seen.

13. **The Indian Magpie Robin :** *Copsychus saularis saularis* Linn.

Has been observed in January, March, August and November, and is almost certainly resident in this neighbourhood, but as there are still no really large trees in the gardens or scrub jungle of the College compound, it only rarely visits us; more frequently it is seen in the forest and in big trees near villages a mile or two away.

14. **The Indian Brown Flycatcher :** *Alseonix latirostris*.

Observed once only, October 5th 1935, in bushes near the garden.

15. **The Blue-throated Flycatcher :** *Cyornis rubeculoides rubeculoides* Vigors.

Seen once only, on November 8th 1937, when a male spent a whole afternoon in a Persian Lilac tree just outside my window and in bushes close to the house, giving excellent opportunities for observation and identification.

16. **The Indian Paradise Flycatcher :** *Tchitrea paradisi* Linn.

Seen only on the following dates:—

December 23rd 1934, male in full white plumage and long white tail, in the Vandalur forest, about 2 miles S.-W. of the college estate at the foot of Vandalur hills.

July 6th 1935, female or immature male, in chestnut plumage, short tail, in Vandalur forest.

August 22nd 1935, female or immature male, in Vandalur forest.

January 14th 1936, chestnut bird, with long chestnut tail streaming behind as it flew, in Vandalur forest.

October 1937, a female or immature male spent about a week in and near this garden; the only time a Paradise Flycatcher has been seen on this estate.

March 23rd 1938, female or immature male in Vandalur forest.

April 19th 1938, female or immature male in another part of Vandalur forest.

17. **White-browed Fantail Flycatcher :** *Leucocirca aureola*.

Seen only in January 1938, when two spent about a fortnight in and near this garden. During this period they appeared punctually in the garden at

seven o'clock each morning; their song could be heard approaching for five or ten minutes before they reached the trees near the house. They spent about half an hour in the garden and then moved on, and we did not see or hear them again till the next morning.

A White-browed Fantail Flycatcher was also seen on March 6th, 1936 in a mango orchard near St. Thomas' Mount, eight miles N.-E. of Tambaram.

18. **The Bay-backed Shrike:** *Lanius vittatus* Val.

Seen throughout the year, but is rare both in jungle and garden from April to August, and very common from September to the end of March. These birds seem to have hunting territory over which they assert a monopoly for weeks at a time, and no other shrike is allowed within the limits. They are tame little birds, and will let one approach quite near their perch before flying off to a little distance.

19. **The Rufous-backed Shrike:** *Lanius schach caniceps* Blyth.

Observed throughout the year, in jungle and garden. Very common. Like the Bay-backed shrike, this bird also seems to monopolise definite hunting grounds and to stay in that territory for weeks together. One which thus haunts the rather jungly garden behind our house is frequently seen singing a not unmelodious twittering song, very different from its usual raucous screech.

20. **The Indian Common Wood-shrike:** *Tephrodornis pondicerianus* Gmel.

Observed in the months of January, February, March, April, September and November; occasional visitor to the garden trees. Also seen in Vandalur forest, but not observed in the scrub-jungle of the college compound.

21. **The Little Minivet:** *Pericrocotus peregrinus* (Linn.).

Never seen in the garden or scrub jungle, but small flocks observed in fig and other big trees in Vandalur forest in March 1934, December 1935, November 1937, and one pair seen at Chembarambakkam Lake about six miles N.-W. of Tambaram on March 17th, 1938.

22. **The Black-headed Cuckoo-Shrike:** *Lalage sykesi* Strickland.

Seen only on the following dates:—

October 15th, 1934—a female, on a tree in the garden close to the house.

March 15th, 1936—male in Vandalur forest.

March 17th, 1938—male and female in big trees on the bund of Chembarambakkam Lake, about six miles N.-W. of Tambaram.

23. **The Ashy Swallow-Shrike:** *Artamus fuscus* Vieil.

Small flocks seen on the following dates:—

September 10th, 1933; August 24th, 1934; January 12th, 1936; September 5th, 1937. Those observed on August 24th, 1934 were sitting on the branch of a tall dead tree in Vandalur forest; all the others were on the leaf stalks of palmyra trees, or flying about in the vicinity of palmyras, on tank bunds a mile or two south of the college estate.

24. **The Black Drongo:** *Dicrurus macrocercus peninsularis* Ticehurst.

Seen throughout the year, very common, in garden and jungle.

25. **The Indian Tailor-bird:** *Orthotomus sutorius guzurata* Latham.

Throughout the year; very common in garden and nursery; not observed in the scrub jungle.

Nests seen as follows:—

July 1933—made of leaves of a *Saraca* seedling in the nursery—two chicks in nest, very young.

August 1934—made of one large *Bauhinia* leaf folded, in garden—three eggs.

November 1933—made of two *Bauhinia* leaves, in garden, two chicks, very young.

June 1935—nest made but deserted before use.

26. **The Ashy Wren-Warbler** : *Prinia socialis* Sykes.

I have not yet learnt to distinguish this species from the next satisfactorily, but either this, or the Indian Wren-Warbler, or both, are constantly about both garden and jungle.

27. **The Indian Wren-Warbler** : *Prinia inornata* Sykes.

A nest and four eggs which corresponded exactly to the description of the nest and eggs of this bird given in *Birds of Southern India*, were found in a big clump of tall grass in the scrub jungle on September 27th, 1934. On September 30th the nest was deserted and empty. The bird itself was not seen.

28. **Warbler?** *Prinia sylvatica* Jerdon?

A largish bird of warbler build is a permanent resident of the scrub jungle; it is brownish above and ashy to white below; its distinctive habit is sitting on the topmost twig of high bushes in the scrub and shouting lustily.

29. **The Indian Oriole** : *Oriolus oriolus kundoo* Sykes.

Seen once only in Vandalur forest, October 1933. In Madras city it is common, but is very rarely seen or heard in this neighbourhood.

30. **The Brahminy or Black-headed Myna** : *Temenuchus pagodarum* Gmel.

From September to early April this bird is very common in this neighbourhood, larger or small flocks being constantly about garden and jungle, but by the middle of April the flocks have disappeared, though an occasional bird may be seen for another week or two. They generally begin to return in August; dates on which birds have been noticed are as follows:—

August 12th, 1933—one bird; August 21st, 1934—one bird, August 19th, 1935—two birds; July 30th, 1937—two birds. Their return is always by ones and twos; the earliest flock seen was on August 26th 1933, but generally no flock is observed until well into September. From September till the end of March these birds roost every night in large bushes or small trees in the scrub jungle, the same bush or tree being occupied quite regularly. The birds settle down early—about 6 o'clock—but are very easily disturbed; we have frequently seen hundreds fly from one bush when we approached too near.

31. **The Common Myna** : *Acridotheres tristis tristis* Linn.

Throughout the year, in garden and jungle. It seems to have increased in numbers with the increase of population on this estate. Nests and young were observed in August 1937 in crevices in the roofs of a College hostel and the cricket pavilion.

32. **Baya or Weaver Bird** : *Ploceus philippinus* (Linn.).

A colony of nests was seen in trees near rice fields at Futtur, about 3 miles east of Tambaram, but no birds were observed.

33. **The White-throated Munia** : *Uroloncha malabarica* Linn.

Observed frequently in small flocks in jungle and garden in July, August, September, October and November 1933 and 1934, but not noticed here since then. On August 5th 1933 and August 30th 1934 munias were observed collecting fine dry grass, presumably for nesting, but the nests could not be located in the thick and thorny scrub.

34. **The Yellow-throated Sparrow** : *Gymnorhis xanthocollis* Burton.

Appears to be a winter visitor to this neighbourhood; has been observed frequently in the garden in February and March 1934, March 1935 and January and February 1938; there seemed to be only one pair at a time.

35. **The Indian House Sparrow** : *Passer domesticus indicus* Jardine and Selby.

Throughout the year; very common, and increasing in numbers as the number of houses on the college compound increases.

36. **The Red-rumped Swallow** : *Hirundo daurica erythrogygia* Sykes.

Throughout the year; first observed and identified in November 1935; plentiful in jungle and about the houses on this estate. Nests observed as follows:—

August 25th, 1935; a partially constructed nest found under a small concrete bridge; on August 29th the nest was complete, the long entrance tunnel having been added, but heavy rains on September 3rd flooded the water course below the bridge, and destroyed the nest.

December 1936—a nest under the bridge in the same spot as the 1935 nest. Swallows flew out when we approached.

June 1937—swallows made a nest on the verandah of one of the staff houses; the nest was destroyed by the occupant of the house, but the swallows built it again immediately and were allowed to remain. They are said to have reared two babies in this nest during July and August.

July 1937—another nest in the same site under the bridge; on September 5th we found a nestling on the ground below the nest; it could not fly; we put it in the entrance tunnel and it crawled at once into the nest.

October 1937—a nest under construction in another arch of the bridge. Rains in early November washed away both the nests under the bridge.

January 1938—a newly constructed nest on the old site under the bridge; swallows flew out of it, but no young were observed.

37. **The Large Pied Wagtail** : *Motacilla maderaspatensis* Gmel.

Throughout the year; very common in jungle and about the buildings. This wagtail frequently collects in large flocks and perches on roofs, twittering and singing.

38. **Bush Lark?** *Ammomanes phoenicea* (Franklin).

Throughout the year, very common, in large flocks in open grassy patches in the scrub jungle and along the unfrequented roads of the college estate.

There is also a lark which appears to be a solitary bird, and spends much of its time in the garden flying up about 20 ft. and then parachuting down with a shrill whistling cry.

I find it very difficult to identify these larks with any certainty. [*Mirafra affinis* cf. Jerdon *B. of I.*, ii, 418. 'It frequently perches on shrubs and even trees and takes short flights in the air, descending again with outspread wings . . . it has a pleasant little song which it utters during its short flights.'—Ed.]

39. **The Ashy-crowned Finch-lark** : *Eremopterix grisea grisea* Scopoli.

Throughout the year; very plentiful in the jungle, and on the grassy tank beds just beyond the college land. These little birds seem to spend the day on the tank beds and other open spaces but very large numbers come every evening to roost in little saucer-like depressions which they make in the unfrequented sandy or gravelly roads of the college estate.

40. **Loten's Sunbird** : *Cynnyris lotenia* Linn.

Observed in thick scrub jungle on a hillside about 5 miles south of Tambaram in December 1932. A pair frequented our garden for a fortnight or more in October 1937, but this is the only time that this sunbird has been noticed in this neighbourhood.

41. **The Indian Purple Sunbird** : *Cynnyris asiatica asiatica* Latham.

Observed in almost every month of the year, in the garden and jungle. There is generally at least one pair frequenting the hibiscus and other flowering bushes, but occasionally they disappear for a time.

42. **The Purple-rumped Sunbird** : *Cynnyris zeylonica* Linn.

Throughout the year; always about the garden and jungle. In the jungle they seem to have special affection for *Helicteres isora* and *Rivea hypocrateriformis*.

Sunbirds' nests have been found as follows:—

March 1934—a hen was observed taking food to the nest.

This was believed to be a purple sunbird, but as the male was not seen it is not possible to be certain.

February 1938—believed to be a purple-rumped sunbird's nest, but only the female was seen. One egg.

March 1938—a nest too high to be examined; it was a new nest, and the outside had been more or less covered with the papery winged fruits of *Tecoma*.

43. **The Pitta** : *Pitta brachyura* Linn.

Observed in garden and adjacent scrub jungle in February, March and April 1937, but not again till October 1937. Since October pittas have been resident in the bushes near our garden. Their regular habits are interesting; for example, for nearly two months—January and February—one appeared on the grass behind our house every morning about 6-30, coming always from the same direction, staying about five minutes and then going off in the opposite direction. Twice we saw it take a bath in the small sunken bird bath en route. Pittas still about in garden and jungle in April 1938, but not so vocal as in the colder weather, nor so frequently seen in the early mornings and late evenings as before.

44. **The Southern Golden-backed Woodpecker** : *Brachypternus benghalensis*.

As there were no big trees on this estate, no woodpeckers came here until June 1937, by which time a few trees had grown to a fair size. One woodpecker was observed in the garden three times in June, July and August 1937, but has not been seen here again since then. They are occasionally observed or heard in Vandalur forest.

45. **The Coppersmith or Crimson-breasted Barbet** : *Xantholaema haemcephala indica* Latham.

Owing to the absence of really big trees the Coppersmith is not resident on the College estate, but occasional birds have been seen and heard here lately—i.e. in February 1937, July 1937, October and November 1937. They have, however, been observed throughout the year in the big trees of the trunk road which runs through Tambaram, and in Vandalur forest.

46. **The Pied Crested Cuckoo** : *Clamator jacobinus jacobinus* Bodd.

Throughout the year; quite common in the scrub jungle and occasionally seen in the garden.

47. **The Small Green-billed Malkoha** : *Rhopodytes viridirostris* Jerdon.

Has been noted in January, February, March, April and July to December, but is probably a permanent resident of the scrub jungle. Appears occasionally in the garden; by no means uncommon; also frequently observed in Vandalur forest.

48. **The Southern Crow-Pheasant** : *Centropus sinensis parroti* Stresemann.

Not in the scrub jungle or garden, but seen occasionally and heard more frequently, in Vandalur forest, at all times of the year.

49. **The Rose-ringed Paroquet** : *Psittacula krameri manillensis* Bechst.

Occasionally flies over garden and jungle, but has not yet been observed to settle in any of our trees.

50. **The Southern Indian Roller** : *Coracias benghalensis indica* Linn.

Throughout the year; very common in garden and jungle, and particularly fond of the chimney and roofs of the College Science Block.

51. **The Common Indian Bee-eater** : *Merops orientalis orientalis* Lath.

Throughout the year; very common, but somewhat erratic. At times there are dozens constantly about the garden for weeks, and then they seem to move on. This does not seem a seasonal and local migration; at any rate no definite rhythm or routine has yet been noted.

52. **The Blue-tailed Bee-eater** : *Merops superciliosus javanicus* Horsf.

Has been observed about here in all months between July and April. The note about the erratic appearances of the little green Bee-eater applies equally

to this one also. At times, for two or three weeks a large flock will be constantly about the garden and adjoining scrub jungle, and then for a while no bee-eaters will be seen.

Two very young birds were about the garden in July and early August 1933.

53. **The Indian Pied Kingfisher** : *Ceryle rudis leucomelanura* Reich.

Two of these birds haunted a big well in the garden for about a month, December 1932 to January 1933. Pied kingfishers were often observed about the garden in 1933 and 1934; since then none have been noted here, but they are frequently seen near irrigation tanks in the neighbourhood in all months.

54. **The Common Ceylon Kingfisher** : *Alcedo atthis* subsp.?

Throughout the year; less common on the estate than in 1933 and 1934, but frequently observed on the irrigation tanks in the neighbourhood.

55. **The White-breasted Kingfisher** : *Halcyon smyrnensis smyrnensis* Linn.

Throughout the year; very common in the garden. Nesting in the earthen walls of a big unused well in the garden in March 1938; two young ones were flying about the garden with their parents in April 1938.

56. **The Hoopoe**. *Upupa epops* Linn.

Probably resident in the neighbourhood, but only an occasional visitor to the college compound; observed here only in November 1933, July, August, October 1935, January 1936, March and August 1937 and February 1938. Seen more frequently in Vandalur forest and on roofs in Tambaram village.

57. **The Bengal Palm-Swift** : *Cypsiurus parvus* subsp.?

Throughout the year; very common about the scattered palmyra trees on the estate, and wherever there are palmyras in the neighbourhood—e.g. on the outskirts of Vandalur forest.

58. **The Common Indian Swift** : *Micropus affinis* (Gray).

Observed only once, on August 8th 1937, about some rocky hills 2 miles north of Tambaram. When the hills were revisited in February 1938 the swifts had disappeared.

59. **The Little Indian Nightjar** : *Caprimulgus asiaticus asiaticus* Latham.

Throughout the year; very common in garden and jungle.

July 11th, 1937 a nightjar discovered sitting; one egg; on stony ground on a hillside in the jungle. August 1st nestling nearly fully fledged; August 5th, young bird flying.

60. **The Indian Great Horned Owl** : *Bubo bubo bengalensis* (Franklin).

What we believe to be this bird was sitting on the ridge of our house roof, hooting, late in the evenings of November 17th and 19th, 1934. It was clearly seen in the bright moonlight.

January 27th, 1935, a horned owl was disturbed by us from the nest, on the top of a low rocky hill about 4 miles east of Tambaram; two eggs in the nest. The nest was a mere depression in the ground.

61. **The Southern Spotted Owlet** : *Athene brama* (Temminck).

Probably common in this neighbourhood, but still appears only occasionally on the college estate. Observed once in November 1934, for several evenings in succession in August 1935, and similarly in January 1936. Not observed near the house again till April 1938.

62. **The Black or Pondicherry Vulture** : *Sarcogyps calvus* Scopoli.

Throughout the year; for the five years during which observations have been made, several of these vultures have frequented a group of palmyras at the uninhabited end of the college estate. They are also frequently seen over the Vandalur forest,

63. **The White-backed Vulture** : *Pseudogyps bengalensis* Gmel.

Probably permanently resident in the neighbourhood, but has only been noticed within the last year. On February 9th, eight of these vultures were found roosting on one palmyra tree and six on a neighbouring one in jungle about two miles north of Tambaram.

64. **The Smaller White Scavenger Vulture** : *Neophron percnopterus ginginianus* Latham.

Throughout the year, but not common in the immediate neighbourhood, probably owing to the attraction of large tanneries about five miles north of Tambaram, where they congregate in large numbers.

65. **The Kestrel** : *Falco tinnunculus*.

Observed twice only, March 17th, 1934 and March 10th, 1938. Each time the bird was seen on the grassy maidan of an irrigation tank, and allowed us to approach quite near and observe it for a considerable time with the field-glasses. Wren disturbed it flew a short distance and settled again on the ground or on a low rock. Both birds were definitely kestrels, but the race could not be determined.

66. **The Common Pariah Kite** : *Milvus migrans govinda* Sykes.

Throughout the year; very common over garden and jungle.

67. **The Brahminy Kite** : *Haliastur indus indus* Bodd.

Throughout the year; very common over garden and jungle.

68. **The Black-winged Kite** : *Elanus caeruleus*.

Observed once only, on October 27th, 1935. This bird, answering exactly to the description given in *Birds of Southern India*, was sitting on top of an electric installation pole in the compound; we watched each other for a considerable time.

69. **The Pale Harrier** : *Circus macrourus* Gmel.

Observed frequently over jungle and garden in all months October to March inclusive, every year since 1932.

First and last dates on which it has been seen each season are as follows:—

1933-34. First seen on October 23—Last seen on March 17th.

1934-35. First seen on November 2nd—Last seen on March 19th.

1935-36. First seen on October 16th—Last seen on March 26th.

1937-38. First seen on November 6th—Last seen on March 30th.

These dates apply only to the male bird, as I have not yet learnt to distinguish the female Pale Harrier from the females of other species of harriers; females have been noted earlier and later than males each year.

70. **The Pied Harrier** : *Circus melanoleucas* Pennant.

Observed in January, February and March of the years 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, over stubble fields south of the college; never observed over the scrub jungle of the college estate. This note refers to the male.

71. **The Marsh Harrier** : *Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus* Linn.

Observed over wet rice fields in this neighbourhood in February 1936 and January 1938; never seen over the jungle.

72. **The Indian Spotted Dove** : *Streptopelia chinensis suratensis* Gmel.

Throughout the year. Numerous in garden and jungle.

73. **The Little Brown Dove** : *Streptopelia senegalensis cambayensis* Gmel.

Throughout the year; very numerous in garden and jungle.

Two nests were found in thorny bushes in the scrub jungle in April 1938; both contained one white egg. They are believed to be nests of the spotted Dove, but the sitting bird flew off so quickly among the bushes, that it was difficult to be quite definite as to which species it was.

74. **The Grey Partridge** : *Francolinus pondicerianus* Gmel.

Throughout the year; very numerous and very noisy in garden and jungle.

75. **The Little Ringed Plover** : *Charadrius dubius* Scop.

Observed on the moist shores of irrigation tanks in January and February and March each year; fairly common.

76. **The Yellow-wattled Lapwing** : *Lobipluvia malabarica* Bodd.

Observed each year in January, February, March, April, August, September and October; probably here all the year round. Very frequently seen on the college playing fields in the early mornings and late evenings; very noisy on these fields on moonlight nights in February, March and April 1938.

77. **The Common Sandpiper** : *Tringa hypoleucos* Linn.

Observed in January, February and March each year on the edges of irrigation tanks in the neighbourhood. Very common.

78. **The Pond Heron or Paddy Bird** : *Ardeola grayii* Sykes.

Observed on the marshes and wet paddy fields two miles east of Tambaram in December, January, February, March and April. Very common.

79. **The Tufted Pochard** : *Nyroca fuligula fuligula* Linn.

Seen once. A large flock was riding the water of Chembarambakkam Lake, about six miles N.-W. of Tambaram, on February 28th, 1938. When the Lake was again visited on March 17th, these birds had entirely disappeared.

80. **The Grebe or Dabchick** : *Podiceps ruficollis* (Vroeg).

Seen in January and February 1938 on an unfrequented pond at Puttur, about two miles east of Tambaram.